

## A Retrospective Glance at Anniversaries

### Significant to Music at UHM

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The year 2007 marks not only the University of Hawai'i at Manoa's Centennial and the Music Department's 60th anniversary, but also some other five- and ten-year milestones significant to the place of music on this campus. The University's first choral group, an extracurricular men's glee club, was organized 90 years ago; its first offering of a credit course in music, band, 80 years ago; and its first professor of music appointed 70 years ago. It was Dorothy Kahananui's teaching of music methods for elementary schools - from the early 1920s in the Territorial Normal School, following its merger in 1931 in the UH College of Education, and after its establishment in the Music Department until 1960 when she retired - that bridged the pre- and post-World War II activities in music. The University's naming the Music Education Wing for her is significant not only to the Music Department, but to the entire campus, being the first - and to date the only - building to bear the name of a native Hawaiian member of its faculty.

In 1947 music was established as a department in the College of Arts and Sciences to meet the needs of both recent local high-school graduates and the Territory's young men returning from service in World War II who wanted to study music at the college level but could not afford to go "to the States" to do so. However because filling the need for music teachers in the Territory's public high schools offered the most reliable source of post-collegiate employment, the majority of the earliest students who chose music as their focus enrolled in the College of Education with music as their teaching field, while others - especially those aspiring to a singing career in Waikiki or on Broadway, or in teaching piano - pursued the new BA in Music.

Choral music - initially the large chorus, the select choir that before the end of the 1950s had toured Maui, the Big Island and Japan as well as it and its members having been central to the department's first production of a Broadway musical show and an opera, and more recently with the Hawaiian Chorus that celebrates its 35th anniversary this year - holds a prominent place in the Department's program. Band music is another prominent component - both the marching and concert bands having received national attention beginning in the 1960s. Performance of orchestral music developed later because, initially there were too few performers of the violin family available - opportunity to learn to play these instruments having been negligible in the Territory. Indonesian gamelan music, the department's fourth large ensemble performance tradition, was also a later addition.

In response to recognition that many of the department's students - almost all of whom were of Hawaiian or Asian ancestries or mixtures thereof - felt ashamed of their identity because they were learning only Western music and ideas, a period of research and study of the traditional musical heritages of these students led to the introduction of a course on traditional Asian music 50 years ago. Although courses on Asian philosophy, history and the graphic arts were already well established at UH and some universities elsewhere, it was one of the first courses on Asian music offered in any American university and quickly led to development of additional courses in and

about Asian and Hawaiian music and dance, establishing the University's reputation as having one of the nation's first programs in the then emerging field of ethnomusicology.

Also in 1957, a festival of 20th century music and art was initiated at the Punahou School which moved two years later to the University where, beginning 45 years ago, through co-sponsorship by the East-West Center's Institute for Advanced Projects it brought distinguished composers - one Asian and one American - to campus each year as Visiting Artists in Residence and commissioned them to compose new works. The festival not only increased opportunities for performance of new works by faculty and students, but also greatly expanded both the Department's and the community's interest in contemporary music - including that of both of these geo-cultural areas - recently becoming a special focus of the Department's offerings in music theory and composition.

As the department grew and developed, the MA degree in music proposed in 1960 became fully operational 45 years ago. Up to that time the department's student enrollment had been largely of local students, except for post-Statehood summer sessions that had attracted many students from other parts of the country. Since then it quickly became more international as a result of the establishment of the East-West Center, whose Institute for Student Exchange funded both graduate and undergraduate students from Asia to study either Western or Asian music, and American graduate students to earn the MA in Ethnomusicology. The year 2007 also marks the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the PhD degree in Music.

Initially housed in an abandoned army building with no sound proofing, it took 12 years for the Department to get an appropriately designed building constructed for music classes, studios and practice rooms. Then 45 years ago its physical facilities were expanded through a wonderful gift - the first and to date the campus' only building funded entirely by a donation of a single person - from the husband of a former opera singer, of the auditorium that bears her name, Mae Zenke Orvis. With additional wings added later, its present seven-building complex includes specialized facilities for band, electronic music, gamelan and Hawaiian performance.

This glance at events that occurred at five- and ten-year intervals from before and after the Music Department's establishment 60 years ago, although not inclusive of all significant aspects of its history, offers a brief time-lapsed view of its development of a multi-cultural and multi-faceted curriculum in service to its students and contribution to the community of Hawai'i, as well as to national and international fields of music study and research since the University of Hawai'i was founded a century ago.